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Illinois Visually  
Handicapped  
Institute



Illinois Department of Children and Family Services  
Serving all citizens regardless of their race, creed, or ethnic background

**B**lindness is a physical condition accompanied by emotional, social, and economic complications. A person without vision or whose sight is severely impaired can easily begin to doubt his worth to society and to himself. He is apt to find that his circle of friends and associates is seriously limited by his handicap. He may find it impossible to get a job to support himself.

How a visually handicapped person looks upon his disability is largely determined by two things: the wisdom, patience, and fortitude he brings to bear to overcome his handicap, and the avenues of expression and personal fulfillment open to him. This folder describes one of these avenues—the Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute, a rehabilitation center operated by the Department of Children and Family Services. It offers counsel and training to citizens of Illinois who have lost all or a major part of their vision. The Institute is housed in a modern split-level brick building, designed for its special purpose, located at 1151 South Wood Street, Chicago. It is one of the finest rehabilitation centers for the visually handicapped in the world.

## EVALUATION

Before an applicant is accepted for the rehabilitation and training program, he lives at the Institute for a week and receives medical, psychological, social, and vocational tests. In consultation with the applicant, specialists determine what he can and cannot do, what his specific problems are, and how the program can be designed to meet his individual needs.

## CLINICAL SERVICES

Testing  
Individual Counseling  
Vocational Evaluation  
Group Therapy  
Social Service

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## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Braille  
College Preparatory  
Communications Skills  
Crafts  
Creative Recreation  
Elementary Electronics  
Everyday Living Skills  
General Education Development (G.E.D.)  
Examination  
Geriatric Services on a special outpatient  
basis  
Homemaking  
Hygiene  
Industrial Arts  
Low Vision Training  
Orientation and Mobility  
Physical Education  
Typewriting

## ADMISSION POLICY

Classes are set up on a quarterly basis at the Institute and usually run from 12 to 16 weeks. Some students stay over for additional study. In exceptional cases, students may be admitted between quarters for individual instruction or service to meet specific needs.

An applicant is considered for service when he has the following:

- a. A serious visual disability which makes it difficult for him to perform such activities as reading, writing, independent travel and work.
- b. Sufficient good health to enable him to benefit from the training experience.
- c. A determination to become active, independent, and self-sufficient.



## FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

There is no charge for the training program, but students must provide their own funds for personal expenses and travel costs. Emergency medical care is provided by the Institute without cost to the trainee. Costs for extensive medical care, appliances such as glasses, and drugs are paid for by the trainee or a sponsoring agency.

## REHABILITATION FOR LIVING

At the conclusion of the Institute's training program, the student looks upon himself not as a blind person, but as a person. He has found, and can find, ways to substitute other senses, devices, and techniques for the major sense he has lost. He regards his blindness as a handicap for which adjustments can be made—not one which isolates him from the seeing world.

While the training program at the Institute is highly important, it represents a brief period for a person who will live all his life with a serious handicap. For this reason, "follow-up" is a major aspect of the rehabilitation process. A counselor of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, who works closely with Institute staff, helps to chart a course for the graduate that will make employment and independent living a reality. He also helps initiate vocational service after the graduate leaves the Institute. The Department of Children and Family Services gives additional assistance through its Community Services for the Visually Handicapped program.

## HOW TO APPLY

Referrals are made to the Institute directly or through rehabilitation teachers of Community Services for the Visually Handicapped, the Department's program unit which provides instruction for blind persons in their own homes. These rehabilitation teachers work out of the Department's offices throughout

Illinois. Further information about the Institute program and an application blank may be obtained by contacting the nearest DCFS office or writing to:

Superintendent  
Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute  
1151 South Wood Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60612

(312) 341-7535

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